### **Roles of Governments**

# AGRICULTURAL POLICIES IN NIGERIA AND IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Dr. (Mrs.) Jane Munonye

Department of Agriculture

AE- Federal University Ndufu - Alike Ikwo

PMB 1010 Abakiliki, Ebonyi State

Email: <a href="mailto:munojane@gmail.com">munojane@gmail.com</a>

Phone: 23490979007

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The paper is a review of agricultural policies in Nigeria. The chronology of agricultural policies at different era was original from the author.

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### **Abstract**

Policy is a process by which governments translate their political visions and intents into programmes and projects to deliver and effect change. Agricultural policies are implemented to achieve agricultural growth and development. The study reviewed agricultural policies in Nigeria and implementation challenges. Secondary data was used for the study. Government archives and data bases were consulted. These objectives guided the study: description of Nigeria's agricultural policies during the colonial, post-colonial and present era and identify the gaps in policy implementation. Agricultural policies in Nigeria have witnessed repetitive policies and program and are yet to fulfill its mandate of food sufficiency. Agricultural policies during the colonial era were more on forest matters with less emphasis on crop and animal production. There was also no institutional arrangement for implementation. Commodity specific policies were directed towards stabilizing post-second world war prices in Britain. There was institutional framework in the post-colonial era and intervention policies with food production as the main focus. But lack proper implementation strategies and monitoring. The present era treats agriculture as a business. The target is to develop value chain and build agribusiness for sustained prosperity. The major constraints inadequate are implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Keywords: Policy, Agriculture, Colonial, Post-colonial, Present era

### 1.0: Introduction

Nigeria's agricultural policy is the synthesis of the framework and action plans of Government designed to achieve overall agricultural growth and development. The policy aims at the attainment of self-sustaining growth in all the sub-sectors of agriculture and the structural transformation necessary for the overall socioeconomic development of the country. Agricultural policy-making in Nigeria has been through changes over time. During each phase, the characteristics of policy have reflected the roles expected of the sector and the relative endowment of resources.

A policy is a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve national outcomes (Iwuchukwu *et al.*, 2012). Policy making is both an 'art' and 'science'. It involves the process by which governments translate their political vision and intents into programmes and actions to deliver outcomes and desired change. It embodies both declaration and implementation of intent. Countries face different policy challenges at different times. The policy challenge could be a minor fine-tuning of the national economic strategies or it may require major wide-ranging changes in the economic environment and by implication significant policy reforms (Eboh, 2014). The quality of the public policy process (including policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback is a key measure of the quality of governance in any society. Policy is a tool for altering economic incentives, rewards and sanctions. It lays the basis for resource allocation by government, private agents/actors. Using policy, the government defines the agenda duration and programme thrusts for its institutions and agencies (Eboh, 2014).

Policy bottlenecks relate to gaps, weaknesses or inadequacies of plans, policies and strategies, regulations, legal frame work and guideline which constraints the achievement of goals and targets. Areas of budget and financing bottleneck include fiscal frameworks, budgeting, resource allocation, resource mobilization, linkage between budgeting and planning, public financial management, quantity, quality, timeliness of funding and value for money (efficiency of spending). The supply side, bottlenecks can occur in areas such as human resources availability and development, supplies and logistics, lack of decentralized capacity, technical and organizational quality, procurement systems, value chain analysis, sector management and institutions, and the absence of comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems. The demand side bottlenecks might occur in terms of access to services (physical and economic), the use of resources, information and education as well as social and cultural factors (Eboh, 2014).

Nigerian Agricultural policy has been through many changes since inception to date. Many of the Agricultural policies are plausible which if properly implemented would have yielded the required result (food security) for Nigerian households. Unfortunately these policies lack continuity and poor implementation. On this therefore the researcher will describe Nigeria's agricultural policies during the colonial, post-colonial and present era and identify the gaps in the policy. The study used secondary data to review agricultural policies and implementation challenges in Nigeria.

### 2.0: Evolution of Agricultural policies in Nigeria (colonial era)

The potentials of Agriculture for propelling Nigeria's economic development were recognized by the colonial government when policies were put in place to encourage output growth and to extract the surplus. The predominant theme of development in this period was the surplus extraction philosophy or policy whereby immense products were generated from the rural areas to satisfy the demand for raw materials in metropolitan Britain (Ayoola, 2001). Interest was on the extraction policy on forest resources and on some agricultural products like cocoa, coffee, rubber, groundnut, oil palm and so on.

Table 1: Documentation of Agricultural Policy during colonial era

Forest Policy	1937	Based on the proposal of chief conservator of forests after a conference. The problem of depreciating forest capital as a result of unregulated exploitation was addressed.
Forest Policy	1945	Revision of 1937 policy: it incorporated the new position of government that (a)agriculture must take priority over forestry (b) the satisfaction of the need of the people at the lowest rates (prices) must take precedence over revenue and (c) maximization of revenue must be compatible with sustained yield
Agricultural Policy	1946	First all-embracing policy statement in respect for agriculture; Nigeria was demarcated into five agricultural areas;  Northern provinces pastoral or livestock production areas

	Northern provinces export crop (groundnut and cotton) production area			
	Middle belt food production area			
	Southern provinces export crop (palm oil and			
	kernels) production area and			
	South West food export (cocoa and palm			
	kernels) production area			
Policy for the	1948	Commodity- specific policy, directed towards		
marketing of oils.		stabilizing post-second world war prices in Britain		
Oil seeds and				
cotton				
<b>Forest Policy for</b>	1952	Territorial Policy declared during the trial of the		
Western Region		regionalization concept focused on forest matters		
Agricultural	1952 Territorial Policy focused on agricultural matters for			
Policy		western region		
		Policy for Natural resources Territorial: Eastern region		
		Resources of forest/ agricultural matters		
Western Nigeria	1959	The farm settlement scheme was the critical element		
Policy of				
Agricultural and				
Natural				
Resources				
Nigeria	Undated	Attempt of the Federal Department of Agricultural		
Agricultural		Planning to assemble numerous policies of Federal		
Policy		Government in Agriculture		

As shown on the Table 1, most of the policies in the era were on forest matters while less emphasis was made on crops and animal production. Most of these policies were made without proper institutional arrangement, programmes, specific projects, strategies, goals or targets and specific objectives.

### 2.1: Farm Settlement Scheme (FSS)

This was initiated by some regional governments in Nigeria and was a critical element of western Nigeria policy of Agriculture and Rural Resources of 1959. The main objective of this scheme was to settle young school leavers in a specified area of Land, making farming their career thereby preventing them from moving to the urban areas in search of white collar jobs. These settled farmers were also to serve as models in farming systems for farmers residing in nearby villages to emulate. Unfortunately, the dream of this scheme was not materialized because some of the settlers were too young and inexperienced in farming thus causing a high percentage of drop-outs among the settlers (Amalu, 1998). Secondly, there was a lack of understanding of the meaning and implication of the scheme by some settlers who assumed that through their participation in the scheme they would eventually get paid jobs. They were discouraged and some withdrew as soon as the allowances were not given anymore. Thirdly, the cost of establishing a viable farm settlement was too high in terms of cash and staff (Amalu, 1998). Finally, the expenses made on the scheme was incurred mainly on installation of infrastructure like construction of houses, school, markets, roads and so on for the settles which did not directly bring about increase in agricultural output by the participants as targeted.

### 3.0: Agricultural Policies and Programmes in Post-Colonial era

Agricultural Policies in Nigeria have undergone five main phases: first from 1960 to 1969, immediately after independence; the second from 1970 to 1979, the period of the oil boom; the third from 1980 to the late 1990's, during the structural Adjustment Program (SAP); and the NEEDS framework (Prabudaha *et. al.*, 2010), Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA) 2011 and the most recent; Agricultural Promotion Policy of 2016 (The Green Alternative).

3.1: The 1960s to 1969: New Policies were formulated in the post-independence era to actualize more equitable growth in agriculture (Table 2). The earlier surplus extraction policies were quickly translated into the pursuit of an export-led growth (Ayoola, 2001). This led to the demarcation of the country into the Western Region (Cocoa), Northern Region (groundnut) and Eastern Region (Oil Palm). In this era, development strategy focused essentially on import substitution- based industrialization to achieve economic growth. Production was decentralized as the states played a major role in agricultural development with the Federal Government playing a supporting role. Marketing boards extracted surpluses from the agricultural sector while small holder cooperative and farm

settlements helped to increase the food and cash crop production of smallholder farmers. These institutions played a pivotal role as links between the government and farmers through the distribution of inputs (such as seeds, machinery, equipment, and pesticides) and in marketing cash crops (Such as cocoa, rubber, cotton and groundnut). However, the share of agriculture in the GDP at constant factor cost declined from 66 percent in 1959 to 50 percent in 1970. The decrease in export earnings and the increase in retail food prices led to greater importation of food, which adversely affected the balance of payments during the late 1960s (Kwanashie *et al.*, 1998).

Manufacturing industries were considered as the most appropriate tool to initiate the process. In this policy, it was hoped that imports would be replaced and internal growth fostered; and that the cost of the strategy would be mostly borne by the advanced countries supplying the manufactured consumer goods (Pearce, 1986). Surprisingly, there was no programme, project or scheme set out to accomplish the goal of these policies. For a policy to have meaningful impact, it must have strategies (Programme or project) geared towards accomplishment of specific objectives and the ultimate goal of the policy.

3.2: The 1970s – 1979: indigenous policies and the oil boom. A key feature during this period was the oil boom that relaxed the financial constraints to development. Within this era, Nigeria earned a substantial sum of over №60 billion (about \$ 90 billion) from oil revenues. The country's oil production was at a record level of 2.3 million barrels a day, while the price per barrel stood at \$ 13.69, having risen from \$3.36 in 1973. However, with a decline in demand from Western countries, Nigeria's production dropped dramatically by 35 percent to 1.5 million barrels per day in 1975 (Osemeobo, 1992). Demand for oil improved during 1976 and 1977 but worsened again in international markets (Osemdobo, 1992).

The imbalance in the flow of financial resources was also reflected in Nigeria's foreign trade. During this period, imports rose by 46.5 percent more than the planned targets, with food, capital equipment and raw materials being the fastest growing categories of imports. Food imports as share of total imports increased from 7.67% in 1970 to 10.26% in 1979 (Osomeobo, 1992). At the same time as imports were increasing agricultural production was suffering due to the latent impact of civil war (1967-1970).

Table 2: Chronology of Agricultural Policies during Post – colonial era

Policy/Programme	Year	Purpose	Strategy
National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP)	1972	cowpeas) and cassava	use of appropriate fertilizer, agrochemicals, good storage and processing facilities, provision of credit and marketing outlets
Operation Feed the Nation (OFN)	1976		increased bank credit to farmers, establishment of community boards and fixing of attractive prices for
Green Revolution Programme (GRP)	1980	To bring about radical changes in Nigerian Agricultural production and eliminate inherited food problems of successive	To bring about radical changes in Nigerian Agricultural production and eliminate inherited food problems of successive governments
Agency-Based Intervention Programmes		governments	
Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP's)	1972	Provision of infrastructural facilities such as Roads, Schools, water supply in rural areas.	To establish effective extension service: Training and visit system (T and V).

		Need for application	
		of knowledge and	
		skills in all the	
		relevant areas of	
		agriculture. This	
		concept involves	
		improved agricultural	
		technologies and	
		supply of farm inputs	
River Basin	1976	To have continuous	Establishment of various large – scale
Development Authority		supply of water in	irrigation facilities, Large areas were
(RBDA)			put into cultivation, livestock and
			fisheries production were intensified
		restrict cultivation to	1
		single cropping	
		pattern the year round	
		pattern the year round	
Directorate of Food,	1987	Transport food that	Open rural roads through the
Road and Rural	1707	-	construction of access roads, and
Infrastructure (DFRRI)			provision of basic amenities of modern
inii asti ucture (DFKKI)			•
		3	nving
		enhance the quantity	
		and quality of food	
		and raw materials	
	4000	consumption	
National Land	1992	Moderate the	To encourage farmers to plant more
Development Authority		problems of low	than they can consume so that surplus
(NALDA)		utilization of abundant	•
		farm land	countries for foreign exchange
			earnings
Agricultural	2011	Revamp the	Development of value chain; provision
Transformation		agricultural sector;	, ,
Agenda (ATA)		ensure food security,	(seed and fertilizer); increase

diversify the economy productivity and production, and enhance foreign establishment of staple food processing exchange earnings. zones. Target rural areas, women, farmers association as well as improving rural institutions and infrastructure. Builds on the gain Support the integrated transformation **Agricultural promotion** 2016 by made of agricultural sector by boosting Policy (APP) Agricultural productivity of crop and other sub-Transformation sectors (including fisheries, forestry Agenda. Aims to work and livestock), Integrating the value with key stakeholders chain and improving access to markets. to build agribusiness Use irrigable land and water basin economy that infrastructure effectively to enable year can deliver round agricultural production. sustained prosperity by meeting domestic food security goals, generating and exports supporting sustainable income and job growth.

3.3: The 1980 to late 1990's during the structural adjustment program (SAP). The collapse of the world oil price was the immediate cause of the financial crisis during the 1980's. Rising and poorly- directed government spending and neglect of the agricultural sector, left Nigeria vulnerable to external shocks. The government enacted Green Revolution Program to eradicate the inherent food problem (Table 2). There was dramatic decline in oil prices which led to shortfalls in oil revenues, which manifested themselves in fiscal crisis, foreign exchange shortage, lower agricultural and economic growth, and high rates of unemployment in both rural and urban areas. The government resorted to short-run stabilization measures from 1982 to 1985 that were implemented largely through administrative controls including import controls, the imposition of exchange restrictions on the current account, significant increases in import tariffs, and ceiling on central bank foreign exchange disbursements. Additional administrative controls included restricted foreign borrowing by state and local governments, lowered ceiling on back credit, and raised bank lending rates. These measures achieved some success on the macroeconomic frontier with inflation falling to single digit, a balancing of the current account deficit, a recovery of the agricultural sector and a real GDP growth of 9.5%. It became evident to economic policymakers that short-term stabilization measures and increased regulation of the economy were not appropriate to address the obstacles to economic growth. In June 1986, after a nationwide debate, the government adopted a comprehensive Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) (Prabuddha, 2010).

## 3.4: Agricultural Transformation Agenda of 2011-2016 (ATA)

The main thrust of the policy was the revamping of the agricultural sector, through value chain development and provision of seeds. Subsistence farmers would also be moved from their high poverty level through market- oriented/market surplus facilitated by Nigerian Incentive-Based Risk Sharing for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) into a commercialized system that would facilitate trade and competitiveness. This would be achieved through the Growth Enhancement Support (GES) investment that is targeted at 20 million farmers at an estimated cost per farmer per year of 5,000 naira. The following measures will however be taken towards attaining success.

- There shall end the era of treating agriculture as a development project;
- There shall no more allow any isolated projects without a strategic focus to drive agricultural growth and food security in a clear and measurable way;
- There shall be an end to 'big government' crowding out the private sector;
- The Agricultural Transformations Agenda will be executed to support Mr President's Transformation Agenda;
- Agriculture will focus on as a business;
- The transformation of agricultural sector will be utilized to create wealth and ensure food security;
- Strategic partnerships will be developed to stimulate investments to drive a market-led agricultural transformation through state and local government, inter- ministerial collaboration, private sector and farmer groups and civil society.
- There will also be sharp focus on youth and women.

## 3.5: Agricultural Promotion Policy 2016-2020 (APP) (present era)

According to Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD, 2016), stakeholders were consulted in 2015 before the formulation of APP. Building on the successes and lessons from the ATA, the vision of the Buhari Administration for agriculture is to work with key stakeholders to build an agribusiness economy capable of delivering sustained prosperity by meeting domestic food security goals, generating exports, and supporting sustainable income and job growth. In this regard, a number of specific objectives for the period 2016 – 2020 emerge:

- Grow the integrated agriculture sector between 3- 6% in 2011- 2015 to 6%-12% in 2016-2020
- Integrate agricultural commodity value chains into the broader supply chain of Nigerian and global industry, driving job growth, increasing the contribution of agriculture to wealth creation, and enhancing the capacity of the country to earn foreign exchange from agricultural exports

- Promote the responsible use of land, water and other natural resources to create a vibrant agricultural sector offering employment and livelihood for a growing population;
- Facilitate the government's capacity to meet its obligations to Nigerians on food security, food safety and quality nutrition. Agriculture's Share of Federal Budget: ~2.0%
- Create a mechanism for improved governance of agriculture by the supervising institutions, and improving quality of engagement between the Federal and State Governments.

The policy will achieve these objectives by focusing on three areas:

- Enhancing productivity by improving access to land, information, knowledge, and inputs, soil fertility, production management, storage, processing, marketing and trade.
- Crowing in private sector investment by offering access to finance and developing agribusiness investment
- Realigning the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to include institutional setting and roles, youth and women, infrastructure, climate smart agriculture, research and innovation, and food consumption and nutrition security

# 4.0: Policy Challenges

Though Nigeria's agricultural sector has witnessed considerable competitive restructuring in the last three decades, the new competitive environment while constituting considerable incentive to farmers, has failed to stabilize prices, and therefore, farm incomes (Olomola, 2006). The 2017 Global Hunger Index (GHI) rates Nigeria as a country with serious hunger problems using four dimensions of hunger namely, undernourishment, child wasting and child stunting, and child mortality. These indicators included in the GHI formula reflect caloric deficiencies as well as poor nutrition (IFPRI, 2017). Although Nigeria decreased by 8.2 from her GHI of 33.7 (2008) to 25.5 (2017), she has remained in the category of counties with serious hunger problems. Although the proportion of undernourished people in Nigeria decreased according to IFPRI report of 2017 but there is a

challenge of continuity of some of the plausible policies that enabled the achievement. Figure 1 shows the value of food importation into Nigerian in recent years; Russia, Australia and the US are the major importers. The value of imports is greatly surpassing the value of food export (Figure 2).

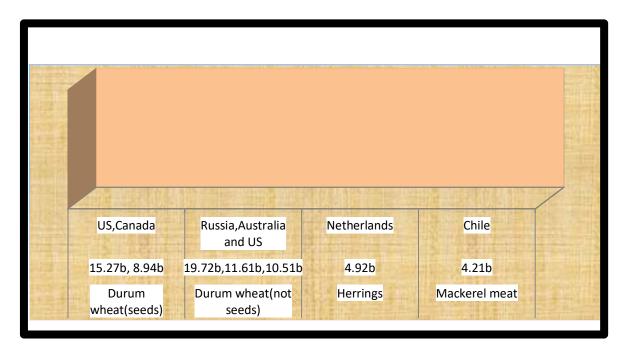


Figure 1: Main Agricultural Food Imports Billion

Source: NBS, 2017

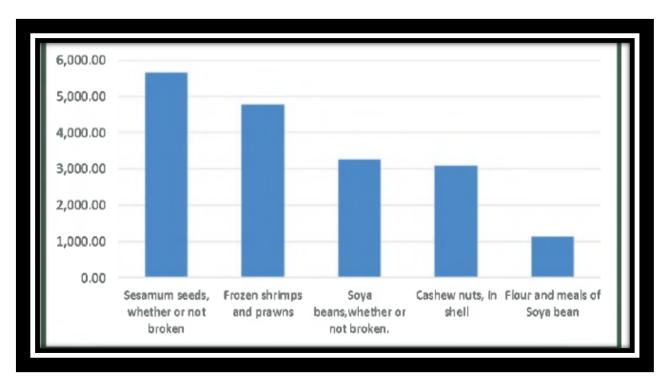


Figure 2: Main Agricultural Imports in Million

Source: NBS, 2017

### 4.1: The major challenges to policy implementation include the following:

Weak agricultural policy Agricultural policies are not specific and are handled as a cross sectorial policy related to forestry in which environmental factors also come into play e.g. forest policy (1945). Developed economics have their agricultural policies spelt out for the world to know. During the post independent era, agricultural policies lacked programmes and projects to carry out the directives of the policies. In some cases agricultural programmes are not consequences of agricultural policies. There is urgent need to reverse this situation so as to ameliorate the persistent failure of agricultural policies and programmes in Nigeria.

Duplication of functions between different programmes and projects, this may be due to new administration lack of interest in existing programme and thereby create a new policy and programme. This brought about conflict of Interest and function duplication. For instance, there was a role conflict between DFRRI and ADP. Reports has it that DFRRI merely removed the sign post of some ADP's and replace it with its own to lay claim to the construction of certain rural roads and boreholes (Ayoola, 2001). Also before the stream- lining of RBDA to the original eleven, much resource wastage had occurred in time of the role confusion and role conflict with ADP'S as well as inefficient direct production activities.

# Lack of Continuity of Agricultural Policies and Programmes

Agricultural policies and programmes have witness short duration in the history of Nigerian agriculture. This was due to personal interest in the formulation of new programmes. Example OFN and RBDA'S were initiated almost the same time (1976) and NAFPP in (1972) and GRP in 1980. All these affected policy duration and development to fulfill their potentials and mandate of food sufficiency to Nigeria citizens.

# Lack of Consistency in Policy Programmes

Policies and programmes should be consistent and should be recognized that policies/programmes can have different impacts on different people (target group), e.g RBDA (1976) and OFN (1976), DFRRI (1986). Both national and Regional

policies and programmes should work in harmony so as to achieve the goals or targets required.

### **Emphasis on Food Production**

Agricultural growth and development need diversification not only in food production but also in food development. There is a need to develop our indigenous foods by value addition and further processing. Policies should aim at mobilizing both human and resources to improve on our agricultural produce. Most of our agricultural produce perishes due to lack of adequate storage and processing that would have elongated the shelf life of the produce. Growth in food production remains limited due to gaps in input supplies e.g., rice; import still exceeds \$1 billion/annum. Many of these activities were reflected and this exacerbated the food sufficiency issue in our country.

### Lack of Continuity, Delay, Embezzlement and Misappropriation of Fund

Government formulates sound policies cognizance of what is obtainable in developed economies but these sound policies got abandoned along the way some of the project example (ADP) etc. have abandoned projects littered around the country. Government needs to channel funds appropriately to make developed policies and programmes both workable and more effective. Abrupt withdrawal of fund by government affects all the previous policies and programmes e.g., NAFPP, ADP etc.

Delay in fund disbursement due to bureaucratic bottleneck of the government affected most of the time specific projects. These projects died before they could see the light of the day. Embezzlement and misappropriation of funds constituted an inference in policy implementation in Nigeria example, the farm settlement scheme where funds that were supposed to be used for agricultural production where diverted to infrastructural development.

### **Inadequate Technical Advisor/Extension Services**

It should be borne in mind that United states Department of Agriculture (USDA) succeeded today because of their systematically timely technical advisory service provided within the ambit of the University based or Land Grant colleges of Agriculture. Provision of extension service has been likened to a factor of production in the sense that it helps in acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by smallholder farmers. It also provides, teaches and convinces farmers to adopt and diffuse innovation. Its absence in educating

participants/beneficiaries on the meaning and goal of OFN, FSS etc. contributed immensely to their failure.

### Inadequate monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes

Evaluation offers a way to determine whether an initiative has been worthwhile in terms of delivering what was intended and expected. Evaluation techniques can serve to improve implementation and efficiency of programmes after interventions have begun, provide evidence as to the cost efficiency and impact of a specific intervention within and between policy sectors. There should be a continuous evaluation of projects to see whether the objectives are met. Nigeria has not imbibed the culture of assessment. This has implication for sustainability or scraping of a project. There is a need for continuous monitoring and evaluation for projects that has taken a huge sum of money to establish.

### **Inadequate input supply**

The system has many linkages from farmer registration and data capture to supply and distribution mechanism. Insufficient access to improved variety of seeds

## **Financing**

Credit access particularly for small holders remains weak

### Infrastructure and logistics

Investment inflows into infrastructure and midstream logistics e.g. warehouses, storage, processing systems remains rudimentary.

### Market access

Post-harvest losses still an issue but improving moderately

### 5.0 Conclusion

Nigeria has over the years formulated policies that would have impacted positively on agricultural development and a secured food supply for the country. Some of these policies were not supported with programmes and projects that would have enabled their implementation. What then happened was the enactment of one policy upon another

(duplication) without any impact in the agricultural sector to ensure the three dimensions of food security.

Subsequent Government formulate policies without considering the already made ones. This made policy repetition a continuous occurrence in Nigeria. For Nigerian agricultural policy to compete favourably with the world there should be a steady and completion of one policy before another. Also a thorough evaluation should be conducted to see whether a policy has fulfilled the purpose or potentials. If stated otherwise, the policy should be scraped and a new policy and supporting programmes and projects enacted.

There are various stakeholders in Agriculture; the policy makers, farmers /agripreneurs, the rural people and the consumers. The policy makers often times omit to consult these groups of people in policy formulation. The omission of these group affected sound policy implementation.

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